

Chairman Edolphus Towns (D-NY) convened a [hearing](#) of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on Thursday, September 23, 2010, to examine potential State Department security shortfalls in Iraq following the withdrawal of U.S. military forces. Commissioners from the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan delivered a sobering assessment of the challenges ahead to ensure the safety of U.S. diplomats in Iraq.

[From Joe Davidson at the Washington Post](#) (September 23, 2010):

A [July 12 report by the commission](#) said the State Department has about 2,700 private-security contractors in Iraq but will need up to 7,000.

"It is not clear that it has the trained personnel to manage and oversee contract performance of a kind that has already shown the potential for creating tragic incidents and frayed relations with host countries," Michael Thibault, commission co-chairman, said in a statement to the House Government Oversight and Reform Committee.

The Defense Department has yet to respond to a six-month-old State Department request for assistance seeking, among other things, helicopters, trucks and mine-resistant vehicles.

Chairman Edolphus Towns (D-N.Y.) said the Pentagon's "apparent lack of cooperation is unacceptable."